THE

Moral and Religious Cabinet.

"To aid the cause of Virtue and Religion."

Vol. I. SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 1808. No. 2.

GENUINE CHRISTIANITY.

By the late Rev. John Wesley.

WE have been long disputing about *Christians*, about *Christianity*, and the *evidence* whereby it is supported. But what do these terms mean? Who is a Christian indeed? What is real, genuine Christianity? And what is the surest and most accessible evidence whereby I may know, that it is of God? May the God of the Christians enable me to speak on these heads, in a manner suitable to the importance of them!

Sect. I. 1. I would consider, first, Who is a Christian indeed? What does that term properly imply? It has been so long abused, I fear, not only to mean nothing at all, but, what was far worse than nothing, to be a cloak for the vilest hypocrisy, for the grossest abominations and immoralities of every kind, that 'tis high time to rescue it out of the hands of wretches that are a reproach to human nature: to shew determinately, what manner of man he is, to whom this name of right belongs.

2. A *Christian* cannot think of the author of his being, without abasing himself before him: without a deep sense of the distance between a worm of earth, and him that sitteth on the circle of the heavens. In his presence he sinks into the dust, knowing himself to be less than nothing in his eye; and being conscious, in a manner words cannot express, of his own littleness, ignorance, foolishness. So that he can only cry out, from the fulness of his heart, "O God! What is man! What am I!"

3. He has a continual sense of his dependence on the parent of good, for his being and all the blessings that attend it. To him

he refers every natural, and every moral endowment: with all that is commonly ascribed either to fortune, or to the wisdom, courage, or merit of the possessor. And hence he acquiesces in whatsoever appears to be his will, not only with patience, but with thankfulness. He willingly resigns all he is, all he has, to his wise and gracious disposal. The ruling temper of his heart, is the most absolute submission, and the tenderest gratitude to his sovereign benefactor. And this grateful love creates filial fear: an awful reverence toward him, and an earnest care not to give place to any disposition, not to admit an action, word or thought, which might in any degree displease that indulgent power, to whom he owes his life, breath, and all things.

4. And as he has the strongest affection for the fountain of all good, so he has the firmest confidence in him: a confidence which neither pleasure nor pain, neither life nor death can shake. But yet this, far from creating sloth or indolence, pushes him on to the most vigorous industry. It causes him to put forth all his strength, in obeying him in whom he confides. So that he is never faint in his mind, never weary of doing whatever he believes to be his will. And as he knows, the most acceptable worship of God, is to imitate him he worships, so he is continually labouring to transcribe into himself, all his imitable perfections: in particular, his justice, mercy, and truth, so eminently displayed in all his creatures.

5. Above all, remembering that God is love, he is conformed to the same likeness. He is full of love to his neighbour; of universal love; not confined to one sect or party; not restrained to those who agree with him in opinions, or in outward modes of worship; or to those who are allied to him by blood, or recommended by nearness of place. Neither does he love those only that love him, or that are endeared to him by intimacy of acquaintance.—But his love resembles that of him whose mercy is over all his works. It soars above all these scant bounds; embracing neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies; yea, not

only the good and gentle, but also the froward; the evil and unthankful. For he loves every soul that God has made; every child of man, of whatever place or nation. And yet this universal benevolence does in no wise interfere with a peculiar regard for his relations, friends, and benefactors: a fervent love for his country; and the most endeared affection to all men of integrity, of clear and generous virtue.

6. His love, as to these, so to all mankind, is itself generous and disinterested; springing from no view of advantage to himself, from no regard to profit or praise; no, nor even to the pleasure of loving. This is the daughter, not the parent of his affection. By experience he knows, that *social love* (if it mean the love of our neighbour) is absolutely, essentially different from *self-love*, even of the most allowable kind. Just as different as the objects at which they point. And yet it is sure, that, if they are under due regulations, each will give additional force to the other, till they mix together never to be divided.

7. And this universal, disinterested love, is productive of all right affections. It is fruitful of gentleness, tenderness, sweetness; of humanity, courtesy, and affability. It makes a Christian rejoice in the virtue of all, and bear a part in their happiness; at the same time that he sympathises with their pains, and compassionates their infirmities.—It creates modesty, condescention, prudence, together with calmness and evenness of temper. It is the parent of generosity, openness, and frankness, void of jealousy and suspicion. It begets candour and willingness to believe and hope whatever is kind and friendly of every man: And invincible patience, never overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good.

8. The same love constrains him to converse, not only with a strict regard to truth, but with artless sincerity and genuine simplicity, as one in whom there is no guile. And not content with abstaining from all such expressions as are contrary to jus

tice or truth, he endeavours to refrain from every unloving word, either to a present or absent person: In all his conversation aiming at this, either to improve himself in knowledge or virtue, or to make those with whom he converses some way wiser, or better, or happier than they were before.

9. The same love is productive of all right actions. It leads him into an earnest and steady discharge of all social offices, of whatever is due to relations of every kind; to his friends, to his country, and to any particular community whereof he is a member. It prevents his willingly hurting or grieving any man. It guides into an uniform practice of justice and mercy, equally extensive with the principle whence it flows. It constrains him to do all possible good, of every possible kind, to all men: and make him invariably resolved, in every circumstance of life, to do that, and that only, to others, which, supposing he were in the same situation, he would desire they should do to him.

10. And as he is easy to others, so he is easy in himself. He is free from the painful swellings of pride, from the flames of anger, from the impetuous gusts of irregular self-will. He is no longer tortured with envy or malice, or with unreasonable and hurtful desires. He is no more enslaved to the pleasures of sense, but has the full power both over his mind and body, in a continued cheerful course of sobriety, of temperance and chastity. He knows how to use all things in their place, and yet is superior to them all. He stands above those low pleasures of imagination, which captivate vulgar minds, whether arising from what mortals term greatness, or from novelty, or beauty. All these too he can taste, and still look upward; still aspire to nobler enjoyments. Neither is he a slave to fame: Popular breath affects not him; he stands steadily, and collected in himself.

[To be continued.]

From KNOX's Christian Philosophy.

The true and only convincing Evidence of the Religion of Christ, or the Illumination of the Holy Ghost is offered to ALL.

FROM the eternal Fountain of light, both natural and spiritual, there streams a light *which lighteth every one that cometh into the world.* Whoever loves that which is good and just and true, and desires to act a virtuous part in his place allotted to him in this world, whether high or low, may be assured of the *blessing* of heaven, displaying itself not perhaps in worldly riches or honours, but in something infinitely more valuable—a SECRET INFLUENCE upon his heart and understanding, to direct his conduct, to improve his nature, and to lead him, through in the lowly vale, yet along the path of peace.

The nature of all men was depraved by the fall of Adam. The assistance of God's Holy Spirit was withdrawn. Christ came to restore that nature, and to bring down that assistance, and leave it as a GIFT, a legacy to all mankind after his departure.

In *Adam* ALL die, says St. Paul, but in Christ shall *all* be made alive. That is in Adam *all* die a spiritual death, or lose the *Paraclete*, the particle of the divine nature, which was bestowed on man on his creation; and in Christ all are made alive, spiritually alive, or rendered capable, if they do not voluntarily choose darkness rather than light, of the divine illumination of the Holy Ghost. The film is taken from the eyes of all, but the eyelids remain, which may be *closed* by voluntary contrivance, or by wicked presumption.

"I will pour out my SPIRIT upon all flesh."*

"The grace which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto ALL men."—"This is the light which lighteth *every man* that cometh into the world."—"It is his will, that all men should be sa-

* Joel ii. 28.

ved, and come to the knowledge of the truth."—"Christ came to save sinners; and we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are ALL under sin."—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden."—"He has propitiated for the sins of the WHOLE world. His grace has been openly offered to ALL men in the gospel."*

These passages, which no sophistry can elude, are sufficient to prove that the internal EVIDENCE of the gospel has a great advantage over the external, in the circumstance of its universality. All may be convinced by it who are willing. But can this be said of dry, logical, systematic testimonies, which require learning, sagacity, and *time* to be comprehended? Such testimonies are fit for *few*, and appear unlikely to produce vital religion in any. They serve men to *talk* about, they furnish matter for logomacy; but they leave the heart unaffected. Neither Jesus Christ nor his apostles thought proper to address men *systematically*. And are critics, linguists, and logicians wiser than the Author of their religion, and better informed than his apostles?

The word of God is like a *two-edged sword*, invincible where it is properly used; but the word of man is comparatively a feeble weapon, without point or edge. The word of man alone, though adorned with all eloquence, learning, and logical subtilty, will never stop the progress of unbelief. The word of God rightly explained, so as to administer grace to the hearers and readers, will still preserve and extend Christianity, as it has hitherto done, notwithstanding all the opposition of the world, and those unfeeling children of it, whose hearts are hardened and understandings darkened by the pride of life. If, therefore, as St. James advices, any of you lack WISDOM, let him ask of God, that *giveth to* ALL *men liberally*, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. The wisdom here meant is that which maketh *wise* un-

* 1 Tim. ii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 15. Rom. iii. 9. Matt. ii. 28. 1 John, ii 2. Tit. ii. 2.

to salvation; and certainly is not to be found in the cold didactic writings of those who rely entirely on their own reason, and deny or explain away the doctrine of grace.

Grace is the living gospel. Perishable paper, pens, ink, and printer's types, can never supersede she daily, hourly operation of the omniscient and omnipotent Creator and Preserver of the universe.

Let us remember, "that to *every man* is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal." 1 Cor. xii. 7.

Mr. Paine, in his attack on Christianity, sums up all his objections at the close. The first and greatest is this, and I give it it in his own words, though it is contrary to my practice, and opinion of propriety, often to cite the cavils of unbelievers: "The idea or belief of a word of God existing in *print*, or in *writing*, or in *speech*, is inconsistent with itself, for reasons already assigned. These reasons, among many others, are the want of an universal language; the mutability of language; the errors to which translations are subject; the possibility of totally suppressing such a word; the probability of altering it, or fabricating the whole, and imposing it upon the world."

Now these objections cannot possibly be made to the *evidence* of the Spirit of God, the *manifestation of the Spirit given to every* man; because the Spirit speaks an *universal language*, addressing itself to the feelings of the heart, which are the same, whatever sounds are uttered by the tongue; because its language it not subject to the *mutability* of human dialects; because it is far removed from the possibility of misrepresentation by translators; because it cannot be totally suppressed; because it cannot be altered; because it cannot be *fabricated* or imposed on the world; because it is an EMANATION from the God of truth, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. This evidence sheds its light all over the Christian world, and is seen, like the sun in the heavens, by all who use their visual powers, unobstructed by self-raised clouds of passion, prejudice, vice, and false philosophy.

LINES FOUND IN THE BIBLE OF A NAVAL OFFICER.

OUR Forefathers *were, we are;* the curtain is dropped and has hidden ages and generations past from our eyes: Our little scene is going on, and must likewise speedily close. *We* are not, indeed, perhaps furnishing materials for history: when we die obscurity will probably spread the veil of oblivion over *us;* but let it be ever remembered by all, that every man's life is of importance to *himself,* to his *family* to his *friends,* and inthe sight of God.

They are by no means the *best* men, who have made most *noise* in the world, neither are those actions most deserving of *praise,* which have obtained the greatest share of fame. Scenes of violence and blood, the workings of ambition, pride and revenge, compose the annals of men; but piety and purity, temperance and humility, which are *little* noticed, and soon forgotten by the world, are held in everlasting remembrance before God: And happy had it been for *many* of those whose *names* and *deeds* have been transmitted to us with *renown,* if they had never been *born.*

One corruption subdued is a victory infinitely more desirable and more truly honourable than a triumph, gained amidst the "Confused noise of ten thousand warriors, and as many garments rolled in blood." For "He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

Remember, my friends, that to be *a child of God is far more honourable than to be descended from kings, and that to be a Christian is a much higher character than a hero,* and let this consideration influence all you *undertake* and all you *do.*

"Act as if the eyes of *Cato* were *always* upon you," was the precept given, and the motive urged to the Roman youth in order that they might *excel in virtue.* The eyes of God are, in truth, continually upon you: live then as in his sight, knowing that eve-

sy action as it is performed, every word as it is spoken, and every thought as it arises, is recorded in the book of God's remembrance, and must come into judgment. "Keep thy heart with diligence: set a watch at the door of thy lips: and "Whether you eat or drink, do *all* to the *glory of God*" in Christ, *his blessed and co-equal Son.*

Permit others to get before you in *wealth* or *in fame:* grudge not to your neighbour the superiority in *wit,* or in *strength,* or *beauty;* but *yield* to *none* in *piety,* in *purity,* in *faith,* in *charity. Aim at the highest honours of the Christian name: be humble and be every thing.*

ON DETRACTION.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,

As the design of your valuable publication is to detect Vice, and promote Virtue, I send you the following remarks on the evil of Detraction.

CERTAIN vices are so glaring, and committed in so public a manner, that those who practise them, have not the effrontery to put on the mask of Religion, knowing it would be impossible thereby to conceal their shame. But there are apparently lesser evils, which are far from being confined to the openly immoral, for they are found even in some persons of a religious character, who, it seems, are not sufficiently aware of the sinfulness of them. Nevertheless, by giving way to them, they wound the cause of God, and bring destruction on their own souls.

As Detraction is one of the evils to which I allude, perhaps the following remarks may serve as a caution to us, that we do not take up a reproach against our neighbour; and may tend to cause the evil speaker, backbiter, slanderer, or calumniator, to be ashamed of his conduct.

I am far from supposing that any truly serious person, will designedly make it his study to ruin the reputation of any one. But I think the evil is committed through inattention to its vileness, and the melancholy effects, which are frequently produced by it.

If a man of the world has received an affront, and so circumstanced that he cannot immediately retaliate, how common it is to revenge it, by endeavouring to injure the reputation of the offender!

If any one, through a kind Providence, has been raised from a lower, to a higher situation in life; how frequently do those who are not thus elevated, endeavour to make themselves content with their inferior condition, by detracting from the excellencies of the person, thus raised above them, by insinuating, that perhaps he has been permitted to rise the higher, only that he may experience a deeper fall.

The manner in which this vice is practised, is such, that generally the calumniator hopes to escape detection. Sometimes, he states the errors, or faults of the person whom he defames, but without appearing to make any reflection of an unkind nature. At another time, after stating several acts of indiscretion, he will put on the appearance of charity, in declining to proceed; and close the subject with a significant shrug, adding, "I could say more, but I will not injure the character of any one I love to be charitable."

When the Detractor perceives, that open censure would be too glaring to pass without reproof from others, or at least, without giving them a suspicion of his design; he cautiously throws out hints, which appear to conceal some evils not disclosed, and deeply injures the man whose character he renders suspicious, but at the same time, secures himself from the charge of false accusation.

When none of the above modes of detraction are likely to succeed, another is frequently resorted to, every way calculated to

effect the same unkind purpose; and, being concealed under the mask of friendship, is not so easily detected. The defamer begins by professions of friendship for the person whose character he designs to injure, perhaps speaks well of some good qualities he is known to possess; and when he supposes he has fully gained the confidence of the company, he closes the subject with saying, "But to speak the truth, for I love to be impartial, although he has these commendable qualities, I am sorry to add, that all is not as it ought to be with him in other respects, I know him well, and there are some secret things which are not pleasing, but I will say no more, indeed I am sorry I have said so much." And thus the deadly wound is given, under the mask of friendship!

Happy should I be, my dear Sir, could I believe that there is on evil of this nature in the Church of God. But alas! persons are sometimes to be found among the professors of serious religion, who occasionally defame the characters of others, who are in the same businesss, or way of life, and depreciate them in the esteem of the public, to gain, as it should seem, an increase of trade, at the expence of those who are thus injured. Where there are rivals in any commercial concern, this is evidently too much the custom. Again: some persons who are not so zealous as others in the same Society, are often wont to excuse their own lukewarmness, by injuring the characters of those who excel them in zeal: While some who are calm and still in their general mode of proceeding, are prone to represent those who have more animation, or more activity than themselves, as bold, violent, enthusiastic, and injurious to the cause of God. And on the other hand, some who are warm, animated, and friendly to every appearance of life and zeal, condemn those who are of a more calm and sedate disposition, as being lukewarm, half-hearted, and inimicable to the progress of vital religion. I have seen reason to think also, that all preachers are not always disposed to speak the best they can, with truth, of the talents, gifts, zeal, piety, and usefulness, of some of their Brethren. In short, where envy rankles in the bosom, it becomes the prolific parent

of a variety of evils, of which Detraction is one, and that not the least. Why should any one repine at the prosperity of another? Another person's downfal surely ought not to be a source of joy to any one, especially to a Christian. Probably it may not be the mean of raising him, in the manner he expected. There is a divine and retaliating Providence, which is often manifested in affairs that may appear small to us, but are not so in the sight of God. And as we do unto others, Providence may appoint that it shall be done to us.

May the advice of our Lord be deeply engraven on our hearts. "Therefore, all things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

I have written in this plain manner, because a growing evil demands a free rebuke.

I am, dear Sir, yours, affectionately,

G. M.

THE SWEARER ARRESTED:
A Singular Providence.

A Friend of mine, who was about two years ago employed in erecting the barracks at Wheely, in Essex, (England) gave me the following awful account. He said, observing one of the workmen to be in the habit of swearing, he had, out of compassion to his soul, endeavoured to convince him of his folly and danger. The youth, apparently impressed with my friend's words, acknowledged his fault, saying, "You are right; I know I am wrong; I know I ought not to use such language; my poor father too often fell into this error—and poor man! one day as he was employed in cutting coffin boards, (for he was a sawyer) one of the pieces of wood being harder than such timber usually is, he said, 'This is a d—d hard piece, it will make somebody a d—d good coffin:' But no sooner had he uttered these words, than he fell backward, and immediately expired

And of the very same piece of wood of which he had been speaking, and which he had cut with his own hands, was made his own coffin." How justly may we adopt the following sentiments :

" It chills my blood, to hear the blest Supreme,
Rudely appeal'd to on each trifling theme !
Maintain your rank—vulgarity despise ;
To swear, is neither brave, polite, nor wise :
You would not swear upon a bed of death :
Reflect—your MAKER *now* can stop your breath !"

INSTANCES OF CONTENTMENT, RESIGNATION, &c.

NOTHING will produce contentment in the mind but the experience of the power of religion. It is that which will enable us to smile at toil and pain, and bear up with cheerfulness under the various evils of life.

1. Dr. Hammond, it is said, was troubled with a complication of disorders, and when he had got the gout upon him, he used to thank God that it was not the stone ; and when he had the stone, that he had not both these distempers on him at the same time. Thus we see how christianity influences the mind, and learns us to be submissive and resigned under adverse providences; and indeed, however men may boast of their courage or fortitude, they must be strangers to genuine and lasting peace, if they are unacquainted with religion. " Poets indeed, and novelists, have beautifully described contentment, and have often charmed their admirers into a momentary oblivion of their sorrows: but this has made way for subsequent dissatisfaction with every situation and employment in real life. The citizen fancies that contentment dwells in rural obscurity; the rustic concludes, that it may be found in the splendour and pleasures of the metropolis. Courtiers pretend to think, that this pleasing companion is inseparable from retirement : the poor erroneously imagine

that it may be found in riches. They who have it in their power are continually shifting from one place and pursuit to another; and such as are excluded from this privilege, envy, grudge, and murmur. The world resembles a number of people in a fever, who relish nothing, are always restless, and try by incessant change of place or posture to escape from their uneasy sensations; but all their efforts are in vain. Does not this single consideration prove, that godliness is the health of the soul, and that without it there can be no abiding contentment.

2. The following reproof given to a discontented man seems appropriate. The man, during the coldness of the weather, was always exclaiming "It is terribly cold to-day." The warm weather coming on he changed his tone, and exclaimed, "It is terribly hot to-day." "You place Heaven," said a gentleman to him, "in great difficulties. Is it not much better to take the seasons as they change, and receive with equal gratitude from the hand of God, the winter's cold and the summer's warmth?" How necessary is it for all of us to check a dissatisfied and murmuring spirit.

3. When Archbishop Fenelon's library was on fire—"God be praised," said he, "that it is not the habitation of some poor man."

4. It is our interest as well as duty cheerfully to acquiesce in the will of God, whatever befalls us. "That we may not complain of what is, let us see God's hand in all events: and that we may not be afraid of what shall be, let us see all events in God's hands." "When I was rich," says one, "I possessed God in all, and now I am poor, I possess all in God."

5. While Dr. Doddridge was at Bath, on his way to Falmouth, (from which latter place he embarked for Lisbon, for the recovery of his health) Lady H——'s house at Bath was his home. In the morning of the day on which he set out from thence for Falmouth, lady H—— came into the room, and found him weeping

over that passage in Daniel, chap. ix. 11, 12—"O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, &c." "You are in tears, sir," said lady H—— "I am weeping, madam," answered the good doctor: "but they are tears of comfort and joy. I can give up my country, my relations and friends into the hands of God; and as to myself, I can as well go to heaven from Lisbon as from my own study at Northampton."

6. How peculiarly placid must the mind of Dr. Watts have been, when in the prospect of death he said, "I bless God I can lie down with comfort at night, unsolicitous whether I awake in this world or another."

Cowards and Infidels—Rev. xxi. 8.

Dr. Barrow has observed, that these two characters are well joined, among those who shall have their portion in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

Cowards are ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, and dare not believe the truths of it. Infidels reject it altogether.

Cowards are ashamed of the Children of God, and are afraid of being ranked with them. Infidels do not see that the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.

PRAY ALWAYS.

The primitive Christians prayed when they began to plough, sow, or reap, and they gave thanks to God when their work was ended. They prayed when they began to build a house, and when they began to live in it. Their salutations, when they met, were not only expressions of friendship, but prayers.

Poetry.

DESCRIPTION OF HEAVEN.

TRANSLATED FROM A SAXON POEM.

NO vital bread, no cordial wine,
Shall store the board or bowl;
Th' essential pow'r of life divine,
Exists in every soul.

No pomp of wealth, no art-wrought vest,
The sons of heaven demand;
In uncreated glory drest,
By God's Almighty hand.

In vain with him its feeble blaze,
Would human pomp display;
Whose aspect dims the solar rays,
Whose smile is endless Day.

There dwells repose, that knows no pain,
And joy's eternal tide;
Ah! haste that heaven of bliss to gain,
'Tis folly all beside.

EPIGRAM.

ON Parent knees a naked, new-born Child,
Weeping thou sat'st, whilst all around thee smil'd:
So *live*, that, sinking in thy last long sleep,
Calm thou may'st smile, when all around thee weep.

NEW-YORK: Printed and Published by JOHN C. TOTTEN, No. 155 Chatham-street, at TWO DOLLARS per year, payable quarterly.
Subscriptions are received by the publisher, and by the Rev. JOHN WILSON, No. 249 Pearl-street. Also, by Mr. FURMAN BLACK, No. 148 North Front-street, Philadelphia.